

HUNTING A WATER NECROMANCER IN BROOKLYN'S WILDS



FREDERICK FRANKE
AND HIS
DIVINING ROD:



NICHOLAS HAZ 1914.



The Iron-Hearted Explorer Who Undertook This Task and Carried It to a Successful Conclusion Recounts His Stirring Adventures.

pyramid. The swinging door was at rest, the customers being all within.

This outpost was entered, and a woman, who was behind the bar, was requested to estimate the distance yet to be travelled to arrive at 1835 of the street on which she lived. She did not know, and an argument was therefore at once started among the customers, some maintaining there was no such number, that it couldn't be done, and one man, particularly under the influence of liquor, maintaining vehemently that 1835 was three and a half blocks away—no more.

Everybody laughed at this, but it was proved by the writer that this man, entirely through accident, and because he gave no thought to the matter, had, indeed, solved the problem. For some reason unknown, the numbers jump from 417 to 1736 without warning or advertisement, and Frederick Franke and his divining rods were discovered a little before dusk on the first day out.

Mr. Franke is twenty-eight years old. He has been in this country two years only, but speaks the language splendidly. He was born in Flensburg, near Kiel, Germany, and for six years before leaving his native land he spent most of his time in the study of the divining rod by making hundreds of experiments.

COMPARATIVE MERITS OF BOOKKEEPING AND DIVINING ROD.

Within the last six weeks Mr. Franke has given up a position as bookkeeper with an importing house to devote all his time to his divining rod business, which he believes will, if the public can be informed of his ability to locate water underground, develop into a much better proposition in every way than can be expected from a lifetime of keeping books.

Mr. Franke is tremendously sincere. He gives names and dates of his experiments. He solicits the most extended sort of investigation by any person who is genuinely interested in the divining rod as a means of finding water or minerals, as, he says, is being done by himself and a German scientific society.

He told the writer that he had located water in

Long Island, Connecticut and New Jersey by means of his divining rods. In one instance he asked a man who knew all about the depth of a certain body of water not to tell him anything at all. Mr. Franke used his divining rod a few minutes and said: "The water at this point is 104 feet deep."

"Well," said the owner of the water, kindly, "we will not quarrel, Mr. Franke, over a matter of a couple of feet. As a matter of fact, the water is 106 feet at this point."

THE DIVINING ROD AN INFALLIBLE INDICATOR OF WATER.

Mr. Franke insists that he could have done as well if he had been blindfolded. He says it is utterly impossible for him to keep the divining rod from rising and falling in his hands when he is in the vicinity of subterranean streams of water.

He uses an aluminum rod—most experimenters heretofore have used wood for the purpose—to ascertain the depth of the water. In proportion to the degree to which the rod rises in his hands will the depth of the water be. This he has found by repeated experiments, under the closest kind of scrutiny of persons who are not, at first, in sympathy with his claims, but who, he says, must agree later that he can perform everything he guarantees.

A meeting place for two rivers underground, he says, is always a place where the lightning prefers to go down. If fire insurance companies and farmers could but know these things, it would save them a lot of money.

With his iron divining rod Mr. Franke says he can find out the width of such streams of water merely by walking over the property, carrying the rod in his two hands. As soon as the iron rod droops downward, it is an indication to Mr. Franke that water is beneath. As soon as the iron rod jumps down, Mr. Franke changes to an aluminum rod, and if that jumps up, he is informed, as are his clients soon thereafter, as to the depths of that particular piece of water.

To demonstrate the efficiency of his divining

rod, Mr. Franke asked the writer for his watch. The experiment was made in the kitchen of the Franke home, in the presence of the dowser's (as the man who works the rod is called) sister-in-law, who was busy at the sewing machine, and of her six-year-old daughter.

The watch was placed on the kitchen table. Mr. Franke took the iron rod in his two hands, stepped carefully along the floor, and when the rod had reached a point in the atmosphere about a foot above the watch—a relic of prosperity, 14k—the iron rod distinctly jumped down toward it.

A glance at Mr. Franke was enough to show that he was doing what he could to keep the rod from striking the watch a hard blow. He was successful in this, and the rod was brought back to its original horizontal position after it had been drawn away from the gold watch.

"It is impossible for me to control the rod at such a time," said Mr. Franke. He was excited, the day was warm, but he would have been perspiring in any event.

THE PERSONAL ELECTRICITY IS CUT OFF BY RUBBERS.

Next, he placed a sugar bowl over the watch, put on a pair of rubbers, took the same rod in his hands and approached the watch in the same manner as before. This time there was no deviation in the distance of the rod from the kitchen floor. It was the same when directly over the watch as before. The connection between the man's personal electricity and the something or other in the iron had been disrupted by the rubbers.

The writer tried it, and, whether it was auto-suggestion or merely the fact that the divining rod is of scientific value, he does not pretend to state. The rod jumped down when over the watch, which had again been placed on the table uncovered. The writer wore no rubbers.

Mr. Franke took the writer's right hand in his left, and with the other hands of each party to the experiment grasping the divining rod, another trip over the watch was made, with the same result—that is, the rod jumped down. The writer had no consciousness of having helped the rod to act that way. Mr. Franke was so sincere that he was white in the face from excitement, super-induced by the success of the experiments. He said he could not keep the rod from doing as it did on such occasions, and the writer's opinion is that Mr. Franke was telling the truth, so far as he knew.

His object is to work up a business among property owners, who, for any reason whatever, wish to locate water underground. He will charge like a physician—in accordance with the customer's ability to pay. He will do the work for an

impecunious widow, for instance, for a few dollars—no water, no pay. A brewery must pay more money for the same service, which seems reasonable enough. Mr. Franke says that only five persons to the thousand, the world over, possess the proper personal magnetism, or whatever one unversed in science cares to call it, to obtain results with the divining rod.

If you want water, why not give him a trial? There is nothing about the divining rod to hurt you or your property, and if Mr. Franke doesn't locate the fluid with it he won't stay for tea.

By using it in the Franke kitchen before starting back, the writer made the trip home with only two or three changes of cars.

MINDING THE DOCTOR.

"It isn't strange that 'Bob' Hilliard should have won the heart and hand of a girl with three millions; for 'Bob,' despite his years, is the handsomest and most elegant creature going."

The speaker, a dramatic critic of Chicago, smiled and continued:

"The last time 'Bob' acted here I met him one morning promenading. And he was superb—top hat, stick, black morning coat, spats fitting without a wrinkle, and one of those cigarette tubes that had just come out, a tube of gold and amber, a foot long, or possibly 18 inches.

"As we chatted and as he smoked his Egyptian cigarette through this extraordinary tube I said to him:

"'Why on earth, 'Bob,' do you use such a long cigarette tube as that?'"

"'My doctor has ordered me,' he replied, 'to keep away from tobacco.'"

A TREASURE.

Representative Henry, at a Fourth of July picnic in Waco, said of an international marriage: "The count, ugly and vicious, married the old maid for her millions. What would George Washington have said to such a match?"

"A patriotic American remarked at the wedding breakfast, as he shook the count's thin hand:

"'I congratulate you, count. I congratulate you.'"

"And here he smiled significantly.

"'On the treasure you have won.'"

CARD TOLD THE STORY.

He—I wonder what the meaning of that picture is? The youth and the maiden are in a tender attitude.

She—Oh, don't you see? He has just asked her to marry him. How sweet! What does the artist call the picture?

He (looking about)—Oh, I see. It's written on the card at the bottom, "Sold."—Tit-Bits.

By EARL N. FINDLEY.
THERE is nothing more wearing than a search for a street in Brooklyn. The one who is searching seems to get so near to the object so many times. That is, people who have lived in Brooklyn are so encouraging from time to time during the hunt. They point out new ways of going about it. They never say die.

They do not come out frankly and state that they know nothing about the street, and never heard of it. They take your word for it that it is as you say. And you say the street is in Brooklyn, because somebody—usually somebody in supreme authority over you, the man, in short, who permits you to collect your salary—has told you to find the street, and attend promptly thereupon to a little matter, which the Boss outlines to you in one of his best and briefest words.

It is always well for you to receive the first intimation that you have been chosen for the or of discovering a street in Brooklyn that le who live in Brooklyn have never sus- of running through their midst—it is fortunate, we repeat, if the order from is received by you in the early twilight ay before the expedition. This gives chosen for the hunt an opportunity the ore to worry about in the office among eords of former expeditions made by mem- of the staff, many of whom failed to return, take counsel among the survivors.

TALK WITH SURVIVORS AND RENEWED APPREHENSIONS.

A talk with survivors is good in one respect ly. It proves ocularly that the round trip can be engineered, but the survivors are so anaemic a rule that by bedtime the man who is to set it on the morrow is troubled with renewed apprehensions that he will not succeed in his er- and.

The writer had promised the Sunday Editor to tain if possible the northernmost tip of Wood- st., Brooklyn, and there converse with a f a friend of the Kaiser, the first named eing a man who not only makes his own g rods, but sincerely believes in them.

for half what the writer is worth would failed to accomplish his object. No won- ed, that he was impatient and uneasy dur- night before the start. He was deter- to come back without the conversation. ew that a man might travel all over the prairies without running across any one d be able to direct him to Woodbine st. mean an extended stay. He might have to advertise in the papers, offering a reward for information as to the last known whereabouts of Woodbine st.

He was ready to offer as much as \$5,000, but he was afraid lest even this sum might not bring results, as, if the street was absolutely unknown, the offer of a reward would merely act as a stimulus to a lot of fakers, as was the case when Charlie Ross was reported found in all quarters of the globe.

It was highly important that Woodbine st. should ultimately be located in Brooklyn, as that was where it was last reported, and there was no known reason for its seeking other parts. Also, in the newspaper business, things are wanted in a hurry, and it was essential that the street should be found, if possible, within twenty-four hours, even if a considerably longer time had to be consumed in finding one's way back.

When a policeman, a streetcar conductor, a barkeeper and a citizen who has lived on the Brooklyn plains for thirty-five years, have six different opinions as to the direction in which the hunt should be further pursued, it is small comfort to the hunter to suggest, by his countenance and gestures, disappointment and chagrin. The Brooklyn people seldom see any other expression on the haggard faces of explorers. And the fact that when a stranger speaks he does so with a feeling of pain leaves the populace of Brooklyn unmoved.

THE WOODBINE ST. DISCUSSION WITH POLICEMEN.

During the early morning and afternoon of a day last week the subject of the location of Woodbine st., and how best to reach No. 1935 thereon, was discussed in all its bearings. The policeman at the Manhattan end of the Brooklyn Bridge was more than half inclined to consent to the proposal of the writer that there was no 1935 Woodbine st., while several other volunteers were enthusiastic in proving its existence.

The writer at length gave his consent—the expedition was agreed upon. He felt secretly pleased at the bold and enterprising character thus exhibited in himself. His forebears had been preachers with large families and salaries of a few hundred dollars a year. But the kind of courage required to hunt for a street in Brooklyn—to subsist, if need be, upon the simplest food—plants and trees, roots and fruits—to find resources where ignorant men might starve, had not been shown by any other member of the tribe.

Nearly two hours before sunset the writer had halted in order to give time to prepare the night camp. Woodbine st. had been located and No. 417 reached. The required numeral was, it will be recalled, No. 1935—sixty miles, approximately, to the north-northeast. About half an hour after the halt the little glade presented a picture somewhat as follows: Near its edge stood the most prominent thing in the landscape—a small brick saloon, like a red cone or